

THE LEGITIMACY OF THALICTRUM POLY-
CARPUM WATS.

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In a recent article in *Madroño* (7: 1-4. 1943), Croizat maintains that the name *Thalictrum polycarpum* Loret (1859), although illegitimate and not validly published, renders *T. polycarpum* Wats. (1879) illegitimate, as a later homonym. He cites article 61 of the Rules, in part, as follows: "Even if the earlier homonym is illegitimate, or is generally regarded as a synonym on taxonomic grounds, the later homonym must be rejected."

Croizat admits that *T. polycarpum* Loret was not validly published. The part of article 61 which he does not quote, states: "A name of a taxonomic group is illegitimate and must be rejected if it is a later homonym, that is, if it duplicates a name previously and *validly published* for a group of the same rank based on a different type." (Italics mine.) The Rules are clear enough; a name must be validly published if it is to prevent the later use of the same name for a different plant. To further clinch the case, article 19 states: "A name of a taxonomic group has no status under the Rules, and no claim to recognition by botanists, unless it is validly published."

It seems clear that the name *T. polycarpum* Loret, since it was not validly published, cannot illegitimize *T. polycarpum* Wats.

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VALID AND LEGITIMATE NAMES—AND THALICTRUM
POLYCARPUM S. WATS.

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To devise a set of rules which shall deal adequately with the almost endlessly various nomenclatural situations which exist or may arise is an exceedingly difficult task. It is therefore not surprising that, in the eight years since the publication of the current Rules of Botanical Nomenclature, a number of cases have been brought to light which are not directly covered by the rules or in which the application of the rules is doubtful. It is not an unreasonable hope that, through the exercise of that faculty mis-called *common sense*, through carefully considered discussion of questions actually arising in the course of taxonomic investigation, through decisions by a competent tribunal and cautious amendment of the rules where really necessary, these doubtful points gradually can be made clear. Their solution has not been helped by much of the theoretical discussion of nomenclature for